

# Appendix D: Glossary

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## ***Aquifer***

A natural underground layer, often of sand or gravel, that contains water

## ***Coliform***

A group of related bacteria whose presence in drinking water may indicate contamination by disease-causing microorganisms

## ***Community Water System (CWS)***

A water system that supplies drinking water to 25 people or more year-round in their residences

## ***Contaminant***

Anything found in water (including microorganisms, radionuclides, chemicals, minerals, etc.) which may be harmful to human health

## ***Cryptosporidium***

Microorganism found commonly in lakes and rivers which is highly resistant to disinfection.

## ***Disinfectant***

A chemical (commonly chlorine, chloramines, or ozone) or physical process (e.g., ultraviolet light) that kills microorganisms such as viruses, bacteria, and protozoa

## ***Distribution System***

A network of pipes leading from a treatment plant to customers' plumbing systems

## ***Ground Water***

Water that is pumped and treated from an aquifer

## ***Inorganic Contaminants***

Mineral-based compounds such as metals, nitrates, and asbestos; naturally occurring in some water, but can also enter water through human activities

## ***Maximum Contaminant Level***

The highest level of a contaminant that EPA allows in drinking water (legally enforceable standard)

## ***Maximum Contaminant Level Goal***

The level of a contaminant at which there would be no risk to human health (not a legally enforceable standard)

## ***Microorganisms***

Tiny living organisms that can be seen only under a microscope; some can cause acute health problems when consumed in drinking water

## ***Non-Transient Non-Community Water System***

A non-community water system that serves the same people more than six months of the year, but not year-round

## ***Organic Contaminants***

Carbon-based chemicals, such as solvents and pesticides, which enter water through cropland runoff or discharge from factories

## ***Pathogen***

Disease-causing organism

## ***Public Water System (PWS)***

A water system which supplies drinking water to at least 25 people, at least 60 days each year

***Sensitive Subpopulation***

People who may be more vulnerable to drinking water contamination, such as infants, children, some elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems

***Septic System***

Used to treat sanitary waste; can be a significant threat to water quality due to leaks or runoff

***Source Water***

Water in its natural state, prior to any treatment for drinking (i.e., lakes, streams, ground water)

***Surface Water***

Water that is pumped and treated from sources open to the atmosphere, such as rivers, lakes, and reservoirs

***Transient Non-Community Water System***

A non-community water system that serves the public but not the same individuals for more than six months

***Violation***

Failure to meet any state or federal drinking water regulation

***Vulnerability Assessment***

An evaluation of drinking water source quality and its vulnerability to contamination by pathogens and toxic chemicals

***Watershed***

The land area from which water drains into a stream, river, or reservoir

***Well***

A bored, drilled or driven shaft whose depth is greater than the largest surface dimension, a dug hole whose depth is greater than the largest surface dimension, an improved sinkhole, or a sub-surface fluid distribution system